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YOUTH MOVEMENTS ABROAD\*

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Every nation has been conscious of a youth movement at various times. The Christian era itself was in the beginning a youth movement. Some German writers (49) like to call such a movement "a philosophy of natural life." Others have defined it as a "spirit." In this connection, Max Kommerell (44) has defined it as "an autonomous spiritual activity of adolescents." Dr. Fritz-Konrad Kruger (47) of Wittenberg College, states that in no case should a youth movement be identified with the "natural contrast between young and old people which has always existed. Rather a youth movement should be interpreted as a cultural revolt of a specific type such as the assertion of the human part of man in a machine age - an endeavor as it were to save the soul in a materialistic

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world - an idealistic rebellion of the inner man against the tyranny of the outer world - a desire on the part of young people to determine the courses of their own lives instead of permitting themselves to be helplessly carried away by the prevailing currents of the day." Recently, Henry A. Wallace, (32) Secretary of Agriculture, defined a "true" youth movement as "a new, vital, adventurous approach to the potentialities of the coming age."

At the present time there are striking examples of youth movements in a number of countries. Youth organizations have been set up by various governments. All these have been very much in the news.

Probably one reason why the youth activities in this country are not considered in the same light as are the youth activities abroad is because they are fundamentally different. The present so-called youth movements of the Old World, with few exceptions, have a political aspect. They, for the most part, represent the exploitation of the high ideals and impressionable nature of youth for certain ends, usually factional or nationalistic. Here in this country, we do not think of the 4-H clubs in terms of a "youth movement." Nor do we regard the Boy Scouts, Girl Scouts, Camp Fire Girls, and other wholesome young people's organizations as such. Yet in all, they enlist the energies and interests of approximately four million young people who are voluntarily pursuing programs which provide genuine satisfactions. And, of course, added to these are the student organizations on nearly every college campus that are for the most part, enthusiastic to do something worth while, not only in solving the problems of youth but also in helping to make possible a more abundant life for all in our own country.

Contrasted with these different types of organizations are those of Europe, among which looms the oldest - that in Germany with its 5,000,000 or more young people and with purposes, in the beginning, as constructive and unbiased in political affairs as are most of our youth organizations in this country today. In 1897 Karl Fischer (51), a 20-year old law student of Steglitz, led a group of student friends on week-ends to various beauty spots around his home city. This attempt to get closer to nature led in 1901 to the organization Wandervogel (Birds of Passage). These young people, in the beginning all under 21, found delight in their new freedom, away from the dust and noise of the cities, hiking to various beautiful country spots where they found themselves in the cool of the evening, or perhaps morning, discussing together those things which, through the strict discipline of school life, were tabooed. This idea captured youth, seeking as always freedom from restraint. Soon another important group, Naturfreunde, (Friends of Nature) was organized with practically the same purposes - antiadult in conception and with its members eager to formulate their own programs and select their own leaders. This general out-door youth movement, in 13 years, spread to all parts of Germany. Then at the celebration of the centennial anniversary of the Battle of Leipzig in 1913, youth by the thousands came together and pledged anew their independence to live their own lives. At that time five hundred of these young people hiked to the highest peak, Hohne-Meissner, near Frankfurt, and there drew up the Hohne-Meissner Creed, which is known as the German youth's Declaration of Independence.



"The Free German Youth feel the call to direct their own lives, setting their own goals and taking them upon their own responsibility in inner truthfulness toward themselves. Under all circumstances, they will stand together for this inner freedom. Free German Youth conferences will be held to promote mutual understanding. All gatherings of the Free German Youth will be free from alcohol or nicotine (52)."

Even in those early years, "this youth movement started as a revolt against a too commercial civilization, against the prevailing strict disciplinarianism, against adult leadership and adult ways - a movement that would once again interpret the values inherent in the great outdoors, away from war, tension, and high speed (52)."

However, since then "the aims of the original movement have been changed materially by adult organizations which have steered them into channels against which the founders originally rebelled. There are many interesting aspects of its various stages up to the present time: (1) Before the war, (2) during the war, (3) before the German Child Welfare Act (July 9, 1922), including in its phraseology 'and care of the youth movements also', (4) after it; and each of these various stages left its stamp (52)" until there emerged a totally different type of "wander" groups which, in reality, was a conglomerate variety of different groups. With the increasing tendency on the part of young people to wander far, there was ushered in the use of the bicycle, making it possible for "hikers" to ride. Soon also special rates on trains were provided, making it still easier to wander far. And, thereafter, in a comparatively short time, the Wandervogel of which we have heard so much, the Naturfreunde and all similar groups of "hiker-wanderers" became relatively insignificant in point of members in relation to the movement which they started. Their aims gave the present youth movement birth. Their creed became a rallying cry for all German youth, and these youth who had risked their lives in battle for the old order began to demand in ways increasingly more insistent that their criticisms be heard and their ideals incorporated in a new order. However, it was soon recognized that the powerful agencies of the political parties and the church were at work, and it was not long before these agencies had captured almost the entire membership, including even the Boy Scout organization - in all over 5,000,000, and had begun to exert a tremendous influence on any programs German youth might refer to as their own.

In 1931, there were in Germany according to Ben Solomon, nine general groups, including 109 organizations, all members of the Federation of German Youth Associations - a semiprivate agency, organized in 1926, which received financial help from the Ministry of the Interior. To be a member of the Federation at that time it was necessary for an organization to have at least 50 local groups and 1,000 members. Many of these organizations maintain year-round programs, including club work in winter months, camps in summer, and some even have leaders' training conferences. Of course, by far the most important of these organizations is the Hitler-Jugend. In the beginning, the members were for the most part former college students without jobs and attracted to Hitler because of the program which he set before them. In the words of Willi Korber (45), this "organization was not called into being as just one more of

the already existing bodies, such as Wandervogel, Pathfinders, and so forth; its aims were not to make things easier for the young people and to give them a good time, but to awaken in them a sense of the responsibilities that rest on their shoulders." Under the heading "The Hitler-Jugend" come all the youth organizations recognized by the National Socialist Movement, i.e., apart from the actual Hitler-Jugend, which embraces the young people from 14 to 18, is the 'Deutsches Jungvolk in der Hitler-Jugend' for those from 10 to 14 and the 'Bund deutscher Maedel in der Hitler-Jugend' being the organization of national socialist girls", etc. Furthermore, "The Hitler-Jugend is not a youth organization in the old sense of the word but - as recent developments have clearly shown - the organization of the entire younger generation of Germany calling for a new social order and a new era (45)."

The very recent creation of a government office with the title of "Jugendfuhrung des Deutschen Reiches" is of most interest at the present time. In keeping with Chancellor Adolf Hitler's plan, this office has assumed the leadership of all German youth organizations and is dealing with all activities concerned with youth. To this office Adolf Hitler has assigned a young leader, Baldur von Schirach, who has already proved his leadership ability as leader of the Hitler Youth - "Hitler-Jugend", having increased the membership of this organization in a very short time from 30,000 to 1,500,000 and having had much to do with its recent political triumphs. The order which created the office follows:

"An office for the whole of the German Reich is hereby created with the official title 'Youth Leader of the German Reich.' The Reich Youth Leader of the National Socialist Party, Baldur von Schirach, is appointed Youth Leader of the German Reich. The Youth Leader of the German Reich is at the head of all associations of young people of both sexes and also of the youth organizations of adult associations. The foundation of youth organizations requires his sanction. The officials appointed by him will take over the duties of the state and communal committees whose tasks are carried out in direct cooperation with the youth organizations (37)."

As soon as the first new Nazi Youth Leader of the German Reich was appointed he proceeded to evolve an organization that was capable of including all the various phases concerned with youth welfare - juvenile law, hygiene, labor, sanitary and medical assistance, education, etc. A special far-reaching organization section was created immediately for the development of the youth of Germany and charged with the duty of including the entire youth of Germany down to the last boy and with recording the most exact details concerning each in a vast card-index register. The most important and extensive functions are exercised by the section for "education, cultural work, propaganda and press." According to a government publication, "this section has to provide the young with the spiritual grounding that is absolutely essential for the existence and future of the nation, for the spirit is the determining factor of the body. To school the young and bring them up as men who will be capable one day of taking over the leadership of the state are the principal tasks of this section and thus of the Reich youth leadership (37)." The training of German youth in sport, aviation, motoring, riding, and naval matters is dealt with by another large section. Still another section is concerned with schools for leaders provided



for boys capable of leading others, and another large section is concerned with all German youth associations, including the administration of the Youth Hostels Association.

Other strong European youth movements are those of Russia and Italy - countries also controlled by a dictatorship system - which probably accounts for the fact that in such countries it has been comparatively easy to start youth marching to rhythmic music, in uniforms that attract, with national flags flying, and with vigorous emotional slogans. Although in Russia and Italy, there was little in the beginning that might have had a rural bearing, these large groups of young people, including in the end both rural and urban youth, possessed, as in Germany, the same spirit and willingness to step forward into the breach and to suffer, if need be, for a cause.

In Russia, it is said that 5,000,000 young Russians from 14 to 22 years of age make up the Communist Youth Association. Closely allied to this association is The Young Pioneers, with its 5,000,000 members ranging in age from 8 to 16. Although, as is usually the case in its original state, the Communist Youth Association was a small group banded together chiefly for the promotion of culture, today it is an entirely reorganized body inspired by the challenge for social reconstruction. "As conceived by Lenin, it is the best possible guarantee of permanence of the social revolution in Russia. Inspired with an unquestioning allegiance to Communistic ideals, after 14 years, it has become one of the major forces in the social life of the country and an ally of the government in matters of domestic policy (64)." As the shock troops of the Soviet, these young people are in constant readiness to demonstrate courage, industry, endurance, and skill wherever the work as outlined in the "plan" is in jeopardy. There, too, we are told that young people are so inspired with the zeal to make the various Russian plans succeed that they have little thought or care for the commonly recognized joys of living. In fact, it is said that many of these young Russians have pledged all their powers and all their earnings in excess of bare living to the support of the government.

As in Germany and Russia, the young people of Italy were attracted to Fascism and really "put it over" because they felt that it gave promise of meeting some of their own economic and social needs as well as those of the State. Since that time, Mussolini has taken an even greater interest in the youth of the State. Government appropriations were made a few years ago for informal agricultural training among its young people. However, considerably larger governmental appropriations have been made recently for the military training of the bulk of Italy's youth that now constitutes the Fascist movement, characterized by its black shirts and its own meaningful insignia and salutes. Due to a state decree of April 3, 1926, Italian boys are encouraged to become "Balilla" (63) between the ages of 8 and 14 and "Avanguardisti" (63) between the ages of 14 and 18. In each case the consent of the parents must be obtained. The programs outlined for these two youth organizations include the teaching of gymnastic sports, assistance along therapeutic lines, camping, use of historic, scientific, and patriotic motion pictures, instructive journeys by land and sea, and competitions involving the winning of prizes for study or work. Deeds of valor, proofs of strength of mind, and examples of tenacious will are all titles of merit for which the youths find support and encouragement at the central head-

quarters. However, there is in Italy the same ban as in Germany and Russia on free discussions which we, in this country, feel are so fundamental to the maintenance of our own cherished democratic form of government. In its place, youth in these three countries find their satisfactions in marching to rhythmic music, carrying colorful banners with emotional slogans, and applauding the stirring, fiery speeches of their admired leaders. In addition, as in the other countries where there are strong youth movements, considerable effort is made to make these youths feel their importance to the state. A few years ago Mussolini, addressing the Avanguardisti, said:

"You are the dawn of life:

You are the hope of the country:

You are, above all, the army of tomorrow (63)."

#### HOLLAND

In marked contrast to the youth movements in Germany and Italy is the relatively unorganized Dutch Workers' Youth Movement of Holland, composed of the young people of the laboring classes.

In the early years of this movement, they could be "seen walking out of dusty manufacturing towns into the free open country, discussing affairs of importance to them while watching the flame of their camp fire by night - by day enjoying country dances in some meadow or along the seashore, listening to the recital of a poem, to the reading of a book, or to the soft music of mandolins, or, perhaps, going by bicycle to visit friends in Belgium or Germany (59)." In Holland now, factory young people are following hundreds of courses in art, literature, and other cultural subjects. In Amsterdam, for years, it has been difficult to find places large enough for the young people to meet together, and, of course, as in all European countries, youth there has become increasingly interested and active in the political life of the nation.

JAPAN, IRELAND, Japan, Ireland, Spain, and Austria also have their youth movements - all formulating a rather similar pattern of how such movements are started, the way they may turn, and their power to build or destroy.

#### CHINA

Now a glance at some of the youth movements of more democratic countries, in all of which there are, as one would logically expect, numbers of youth organizations, each with its own aims and plans. Perhaps the youth movement of China is the oldest of all. "In comparing this youth movement with that of Germany, we find that both started among discontented students, in Steglitz and Peking, dissatisfied with the existing order of life and keenly conscious of their own responsibility for the future. Both were led by what we today would consider progressive teachers and, incidentally, in the beginning of the movements were youths themselves. Although both were quite closely connected with the political life, there was in the beginning a distinct tendency for the youth of both nations to keep away from politics - their whole attention being directed toward cultural lives, each conscious of a passionate desire for new ways of life and new culture as a sequence to the proclaimed revolt against the old life. Both encouraged enjoyment of poetry, plays, novels, arts, folk song and dancing, philosophy and literature, and both found expression through a flood of magazines and periodicals - approximately 100 in Germany, 300 in China. Both declared themselves for freedom of thought, democracy in human relationships and humaneness in international and racial dealings. And in both today, there is a



revolt against the domination of capitalism, militarism, and narrow nationalism. Both are sympathetic with the youth of all nations and with the laboring and oppressed classes in their own countries. Incidentally, in China, it may be of particular interest to us that its youth are much concerned with the very poor conditions of its farming population (35)." However, there are a few striking differences in connection with these two youth movements. "In Germany in the beginning, the life of the past was idealized as opposed to modern life, especially to urban life; while in China, in the beginning, its youth movement emphasized the thought of modern life as opposed to the life of old China. In Germany, much emphasis was, and, to some extent, is still placed on wandering youth, with its folk songs and dances. On the other hand, in China, the youth movement has had, from the beginning, an intellectual rather than a romantic emphasis. Young China is intent on re-interpreting all cultural values, ancient and modern, and is the moving spirit, as in all these countries, behind the social transformation - making for a great spiritual uprising against the almost overwhelming obstacles as seen in the forbidding attitudes of their elders, suppression of high-handed government officials, and interference of foreign powers (35)."

LATIN AMERICA Quite similar in feeling to the Chinese youth movements are those found in the Latin American countries where student associations are strong and wield considerable influence both in university administration and affairs of state. In this relation, the activities of the students of Cuba are of special interest, for, during this past year, these students, the educated minority, aroused by the actions of Machado in closing all educational institutions and clubs, seized the government and made their favorite university professor president. The success of this small group for the time being won for itself world-wide attention, and soon people were discussing the "Cuban Youth Movement."

Latin American students everywhere are earnestly seeking among many other things a greater voice in university affairs and the political union of Latin America. Moreover, they are in deep sympathy with the laboring classes and have given generously of their time and gifts to provide them with free instruction. In Peru, Chile, Guatemala, Mexico, and other countries "the students have founded 'popular universities', centers of education for the workers and peasants. This closer contact between workers and students, has formed in each republic of Latin America a strong vanguard of youth (73)."

DENMARK In nearly all European democratic countries there is a growing abhorrence of the uniform because of what it means in the dictatorship countries - Russia, Germany, and Italy. Denmark, for example, we are told, has just passed an edict barring the wearing of uniforms except by those in government service. Obviously this is an attempt to bar the Communists and Fascists, but even the Boy Scouts have had to dispense with their uniforms. Incidentally, also, it may be of interest that with the beginning of the dictatorship system in Germany and Italy, the Scout organizations became absorbed in the political youth organizations of these two countries.

Referring again to Denmark, any youth movement that may originate there will bear the earmarks of a real rural society with the "Danish Folk School",

founded by Nikolaj Frederick Severin Grundtvig in 1844, playing a large part. Of course, it is well known that the government, as in several of the other northern European countries, is interested in developing 4-H club work on much the same lines as it is developed in the United States. However, such work is still too new to be studied as to its influence upon any present situation.

#### FRANCE

In France it is difficult to find what can be designated as a youth movement; for France, too, is dominantly agricultural as well as democratic, with its small farms and individualistic farmers, proud that they are owners of the soil even though the plots may be small. However, there are some who speak of the youth movements of France, which in reality are made up of a very small minority of young people belonging to Communist and Royalist groups.

#### ENGLAND

In England, as in other democratic countries, one sees no such striking evidence of a youth movement, often with the emotions of the members highly trained, as is at once evident when visiting Russia, Germany, or Italy. At the present time in England a number of youth organizations are actively at work, particularly concerned with the political welfare of the state, such as the Junior Imperial League, Lancashire and Cheshire Federation of Junior Unionist Associations, Young Britons, Young Conservatives' Union, Labor Party League of Youth, Independent Labor Party Guild of Youth, Young Communist League, National League of Young Liberals, and Youth of the Empire Guild. In addition, Sir Oswald Mosley is actively engaged in starting what he terms "British Fascism", and we are told that about 20,000 young men wearing the black shirts are now enrolled. At the present time, also in England, there is a strong wave of sentiment in favor of summer camping, which involves much construction of camp dwellings by the young people themselves. Of interest too is the hostel movement which is now gaining headway and has made notable strides in most European countries.

#### YOUTH HOSTEL MOVEMENT

The youth hostel movement (Jugend Herbergen) was started in Germany by Richard Schirrmann, a school teacher of Altena, Westphalia, about 1909. This movement in Germany excited the interest of so many English walkers in Germany, that the establishment of similar hostels (shelters) in England to foster a love of the countryside was only a matter of time. However, it was not until 1931 that the hostel movement was really established in England. During its first year, the Youth Hostel Association of England established some 60 hostels, with 1,000 beds ready at a shilling a night, with battalions of volunteers scouring the countryside along selected routes searching out suitable premises and helping to convert and equip them into interesting, comfortable hostels. In 1933, the number of hostels had increased to 200 and the membership to 20,000. In addition, in 1932 alone, nearly 3,000 hostel visits were made by foreign wanderers (55)", many of whom, it is safe to say, could have afforded to visit England by no other means. According to R. G. Collin Smith (57), "This freedom of international movement for youth is among the highest ideals of the movement and is surely one of the chief hopes for good feeling and understanding between the nations of the world in the future."

Most people know at least a little of the German movement on which the youth hostel associations of England and Scotland are modeled. Its 2,600 or



more hostels throughout Germany where lodging is available for a few pence a night; its traditions of good fellowship and discipline; its power as an educational force - these are things of which most people are aware and are the product of 25 years' growth. To us who have witnessed the steady growth of our own 4-H club movement, especially in the past 25 years, it is of particular interest that there are now hostels, including reconstructed buildings, mansions formerly belonging to the nobility, ancient castles in the Rhineland, and specially built and very modern shelters in 17 countries in Europe. "In fact, every European country, with few exceptions, has its youth hostel associations and boasts shelter houses similar to those of Germany. Norway, Sweden, and Finland are all promoting this type of youth organization (52)."

In the last year, there has been organized "The American Youth Hostel Association (26)" with headquarters in Philadelphia and with purposes similar to those of the European associations. The statement of aims as published by the association reads, "to enable youth to travel in extreme simplicity at a minimum of expense through the length and breadth of our land (26)." It is intended by those responsible for the association that the hostels will facilitate extensive wandering by being built in a network covering the whole country, to the end that the resultant wandering will not only make possible all the cultural benefits of travel but also will arouse American young people to an appreciation of nature, and that in the enjoyment of it they may develop into happier, stronger, cleaner, and more wholesome youth. At the same time that the American Youth Hostel Association is seeking to fulfill its purpose in America as the new member of the International Association of Youth Hostels with organizations in 17 other countries, it also is offering to American youth the opportunity to wander, under its sponsorship, through the hostels of Europe. In this connection, it may be of interest to us as club leaders, to note some of the simple rules of these European hostels:

- Obedience to all local shelter rules.
- Obedience to house father, mother, or leader.
- No smoking.
- No drinking of alcoholic beverages.
- To help oneself and leave things clean and tidy.
- On grounds, no discussion or singing in connection with any political or religious subject.
- To go to bed not later than 10 and to arise not later than 8:30.

The hostels are primarily for the benefit of youth of both sexes. However, older people may use them if they are members, but young wanderers under 20 years of age have preference up to seven o'clock in the evening. The presentation of a membership card and identification papers is always required on entering a hostel, where one is impressed almost instantly by its spirit of friendliness. Political and religious discussions are tabooed and commercial travelers, ordinary summer tourists, and similar persons are never admitted.

Order and good conduct are essential, and several persons who have made a study of these hostels tell us that the rules rarely are broken and that nothing is ever stolen, nor is there ever any rough-house. Of course, objections are sometimes raised to these hostel movements in the various countries but



several critics who have studied them carefully believe that these objections on the whole are ill-founded. On the other hand, in Germany and in many of the other countries as well, according to Ben Solomon (52), "these singing, playing, wandering boys and girls vision a new day. These youths are bringing cleaner, healthier bodies, broader viewpoints, and more tolerant attitudes to their own countries. Wandering to distant places and getting better acquainted with their once strange neighbors develops better understanding and greater love. A youth group that has learned to play together will contribute much to a better tomorrow."

#### SUMMARY

In summarizing, it would seem important for us as 4-H club leaders to note, first, that the so-called youth movements of Europe were started in most cases by urban youth organized in small groups seeking freedom from the restraints of their homes and classrooms and conscious of their power to assume responsibility; and that, in a number of countries, notably Germany, the development of a love and appreciation of their own native open country became their first and for a time their dominant aim.

Second, that these youth organizations gradually developed into strong youth bodies, increasingly desirous of studying the cultural things of life and, as they gained under their own power, became increasingly influenced by adults who saw in such organizations great possibilities. In the dictatorship countries, during their national crises, the youth organizations of each of these countries soon became welded into a forward-moving enterprise, partaking somewhat of the nature of a crusade, and became increasingly conscious of taking part in a great social rebirth in the righting of the prevailing great wrongs. In each of these three countries they were emotionalized by a vigorous, dynamic, dramatic personality who in assuming dictatorial powers, was able to gain an immediate popular response on the part of all youth. Stalin, Hitler, and Mussolini, each has realized circumspectly or instinctively, that if a moral enthusiasm is touched something politically important springs into being, and that if youth is captured the future is assured.

Third, that in each of these three dictatorship countries the youth movement gained real momentum from general suffering, and revulsion toward the causes of this suffering by the young people themselves. They had experienced real hardships. They were without jobs - in fact, Dr. C. F. Warren refers to the European youth movements as "never-had-a-job" movements. Furthermore, the program to right these wrongs as promised by the dictator of each country became in essence the rallying cry of its youth, and their voice eventually became identical with the voice of the dictator. Moreover, the opportunities for free discussion cherished in the beginning of these youth movements finally gave way to plaudits or speeches regarding whatever might be the will of the dictator.

Fourth, a study of youth organizations of all countries shows that youth reacts quickly to purposes that are big, far-reaching, as it were, toward a new day in combating a limiting and unjust order; and that they enjoy marching to rhythmic music with colorful flags and banners, adorned with slogans decrying the wrongs suffered and proclaiming the ends to be ultimately gained.

Fifth, that youth movements have grown as they have been recognized by adults as being important and useful in the whole structure of social and political affairs. Such recognition is exceedingly satisfying to youth.

Sixth, it may be noted that rural youth has played no conspicuous part in the starting of any of these recognized youth movements - each with its own peculiar and very obvious spirit which, incidentally, seems to be the main characteristic of any so-called youth movement. However, as these movements have gained headway, rural youth has been swept into them.

Seventh, that there is now considerable discussion regarding the dangers as well as the desirability of a youth movement in this country. It may be recalled that in the early 1920's there was an effort to start in this country a youth movement similar to those of European countries. This effort met with little response, probably because of the fact that our young people were undergoing no real hardships. As soon as they were ready for a job, with factories working at full speed to meet an increased demand, it was easy to find work. Now again, there is discussion regarding a youth movement in this country, but the situation as compared to that of the early twenties is quite different. A large number of young people in this country now are really suffering. Irrespective of training or need for work, comparatively few jobs are to be had. In addition, because of the present ease with which the human voice can be heard around the world, news of the youth movements in other countries is concentrating attention on youth in this country as never before. Many, often with selfish views, have sensed both this situation and opportunity. They know well how such movements start, how they may be capitalized, and how they may be emotionalized. Therein lies a grave danger of the exploitation of the youth of our country for selfish purposes. Moreover, some may sense the beginning of a youth movement in this country in the already-wandering groups - both our 100,000 or more unemployed youth tramping the highways and availing themselves of the free accommodations at transient camps or hotels now made possible in many of our cities, and those groups that wander solely in pursuit of pleasure and that we see every summer, hiking the trails of our New England and Western mountains, and every winter, going on excursion trains to enjoy or watch the winter sports. This urge to wander far in this country has been given added impetus through the use of the automobile, the bus, and the tourist camp. Camping itself has been gaining headway steadily and the Civilian Conservation Corps Camps have attracted intense interest and speculation. Even a movement like the European hostel association movement has been definitely started in this country. In addition, college student organizations are becoming increasingly active and alert to political happenings. Also, in several sections of our country, especially in our large city high schools, it is said that groups financed by money from abroad are quietly if not secretly at work on vigorous propaganda campaigns, principally in the interests of Communism and Fascism. It is said that such campaigns are to train the youth contacted not only in the basic governmental principles involved, but in parliamentary procedure, to the end that these youth may be effective in reaching their objectives in any mixed gathering of youth.

However, it would seem that the social situation in the United States is enough different to warrant the speculation that its various components will not be unified into what is commonly recognized as a youth movement in any way similar to that of any of the European dictatorship countries, save through some



great leveling tragedy reaching all. For first, there is prevalent in the United States a deep-seated regard for its democratic form of government. Second, because of its vast farming areas and widely scattered cities, it would be difficult for young people to organize effectively or to function intelligently as members of a single, regimented youth organization. And third, there are already in the United States many strongly entrenched social agencies effectively operating in the interests of youth.

So far as youth itself is concerned in this country, it would seem also, on the whole, that if it is allowed freedom, particularly in the formulation and carrying out of its own programs and the selection of its own leaders, youth will play a much needed part in studying and interpreting national developments and in strengthening constructive national procedures, free from regimentation in any form. Moreover, under such circumstances, we as adults shall be able to go along with our youth. For it is a commonly recognized fact that young people, without adult guidance, are prone to become radical and to do rash things to be regretted later as much by themselves as by those older than they. Dorothy Canfield Fisher, in referring to her observations in Austria, recently said, "You know our present generation of college boys and girls seems actually to think we older folks do know something. It is only when we try to bully our young people that they rise up and resent us. I believe that our youth are not radical because we give them more freedom. They do not have the urge for rebellion that is perhaps what makes youth radical in many other countries."

In our own 4-H club work, we have aimed to give our youth freedom to work out their own local programs and in many instances, freedom to select their own leaders. Furthermore, in most States, 4-H club members have been made to feel that they have an important part to play in community activities and that their efforts do count. The same attitude has been taken regarding the organization of the 4-H college clubs, which are beginning to wield considerable influence in relation to college affairs throughout the country. You leaders yourselves have a sympathetic, youthful attitude, founded on a deep-seated respect for youth itself as well as a profound sense of responsibility in making the work and opportunities afforded youth as sound as possible from both an educational and economic standpoint. Largely because of this set-up, 4-H club work is being increasingly recognized as a potential stabilizing factor in relation to any youth movement that may get started in the United States. Nevertheless as 4-H club leaders, let us renew our efforts in these strenuous, uncertain times: First, in recognizing the importance of youth and our own possible influence in any movement that may gain momentum; and second, in maintaining our own youth activities on as high a plane as possible, in keeping with the best known facts in relation to youth's characteristics, needs, interests, and potentialities - steadfastly intent on getting youth to think rather than to embrace any set of facts. If such obtains, it is reasonable to assume that our own youth as community builders - free from dogma and prejudice - may be found wisely and sincerely alert as members of free discussion groups in seeking all known facts for making their own decisions, as well as in seeking the truly worthwhile things of life in accordance with the ideals of American democracy which, in turn, may thereby be increasingly understood, treasured, and defended.



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